

Senate Bill No. 562

CHAPTER 624

An act to amend Section 1657 of the Business and Professions Code, relating to dentists.

[Approved by Governor October 7, 2013. Filed with
Secretary of State October 7, 2013.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 562, Galgiani. Dentists: mobile or portable dental units.

Existing law, the Dental Practice Act, provides for the licensure and regulation by the Dental Board of California of those engaged in the practice of dentistry. Existing law provides that a person practices dentistry if the person, among other things, manages or conducts as manager, proprietor, conductor, lessor, or otherwise, in any place where dental operations are performed. Existing law authorizes a dentist to operate one mobile dental clinic or unit that is registered and operated in accordance with regulations adopted by the board. Existing law exempts specified mobile units from those requirements. Other provisions of existing law, the Mobile Health Care Services Act, require, subject to specified exemptions, licensure by the State Department of Health Care Services to operate a mobile service unit.

This bill would eliminate the one mobile dental clinic or unit limit and would require a mobile dental unit or a dental practice that routinely uses portable dental units, as defined, to be registered and operated in accordance with the regulations of the board. The bill would require any regulations adopted by the board pertaining to these matters to require the registrant to identify a licensed dentist responsible for the mobile dental unit or portable practice, and to include requirements for availability of followup and emergency care, maintenance and availability of provider and patient records, and treatment information to be provided to patients and other appropriate parties.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 1657 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

1657. (a) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) "Mobile dental unit" means a self-contained facility, which may include a trailer or van, in which dentistry is practiced that may be moved, towed, or transported from one location to another.

(2) “Portable dental unit” means a self-contained unit housing equipment used for providing dental treatment that is transported to, and used on a temporary basis at, nondental office locations.

(b) A mobile dental unit, or a dental practice that routinely uses portable dental units to provide treatment in nondental office locations, shall be registered and operated in accordance with regulations established by the board. These regulations shall not be designed to prevent or lessen competition in service areas. The regulations shall require the registrant to identify a licensed dentist responsible for the mobile dental unit or portable practice, and shall include, but shall not be limited to, requirements for availability of followup and emergency care, maintenance and availability of provider and patient records, and treatment information to be provided to patients and other appropriate parties. A mobile dental unit, or a dental practice using portable dental units, registered and operated in accordance with the board’s regulations and that has paid the fees established by the board, including a mobile dental unit registered for the purpose specified in subdivision (e), shall otherwise be exempt from this article and Article 3.5 (commencing with Section 1658).

(c) A mobile service unit, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 1765.105 of the Health and Safety Code, and a mobile dental unit or portable dental unit operated by an entity that is exempt from licensure pursuant to subdivision (b), (c), or (h) of Section 1206 of the Health and Safety Code, are exempt from this article and Article 3.5 (commencing with Section 1658). Notwithstanding this exemption, the owner or operator of the mobile unit shall notify the board within 60 days of the date on which dental services are first delivered in the mobile unit, or the date on which the mobile unit’s application pursuant to Section 1765.130 of the Health and Safety Code is approved, whichever is earlier.

(d) A licensee practicing in a mobile unit described in subdivision (c) is not subject to subdivision (b) as to that mobile unit.

(e) Notwithstanding Section 1625, a licensed dentist shall be permitted to operate a mobile dental unit provided by his or her property and casualty insurer as a temporary substitute site for the practice registered by him or her pursuant to Section 1650 as long as both of the following apply:

(1) The licensed dentist’s registered place of practice has been rendered and remains unusable due to loss or calamity.

(2) The licensee’s insurer registers the mobile dental unit with the board in compliance with subdivision (b).